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ABSTRACT

This paper highlights New Jersey's community colleges and their efforts to respond to market and consumer needs. Since one-third of the average New Jersey community college operating budget is paid by credit and non-credit students and clients, the colleges must approach their business like private sector enterprises, performing market research and meeting customer needs with quality programs and services. Each college does research in its service area through surveys of business and industry as well as through focus groups of employers, students, and former students. Academic officers, deans of continuing education, and institutional researchers carefully follow labor market projections. This document discusses: (1) industry clusters, concentrations of particular businesses in certain counties that assure that the local community college will provide occupational programs to support those industries; (2) downsizing and retooling, including initiatives to meet the needs of displaced workers; (3) licensure and certification, stating that within the last decade the number of occupations requiring licensure in New Jersey has risen dramatically; (4) retaining and attracting jobs; (5) building strategic alliances; and (6) supporting the middle class. Provided is a table of examples of jobs retained or added through community college training, and a table of mean annual earnings by levels of education. (EMH)

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THE BUSINESS OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

By SaraLee Pindar

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THE BUSINESS OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

By SaraLee Pindar

New Jersey's 19 community colleges are large and successful workforce development businesses that have been growing continuously over the past 30 years. Today, they serve more than 250,000 adult students and customers annually in an extraordinary array of instructional credit and noncredit programs and services. They have 43 locations throughout the state responding to the workforce education needs of local market areas. But many people involved in economic development tend to overlook the powerful support that community colleges provide.

Especially in the Northeast United States, with its European heritage of higher education, a college is sometimes deemed to be of high quality only if it is more than 100 years old and engages in postdoctoral research. In most of the country, however, community colleges are highly valued as uniquely American institutions that support the economy through effective workforce development. North Carolina, for example, still boasts that it built its diversified industrial base on the customized training provided by its community colleges.¹

This is the first in a series of Occasional Papers that the Council of County College plans to publish on topics important to community colleges throughout the state and nationally.

New Jersey's community colleges have long been known for their strong contributions to economic development in their local communities. More recently, community colleges have emerged as one of New Jersey's premier providers of state-level economic development programs and services.

This paper highlights the critical role community colleges are playing in providing the highly skilled manpower needed by business, large and small, throughout New Jersey. There is simply no higher priority for New Jersey's community colleges than economic development and workforce development activities both in their local communities and statewide.

Additional copies of this report, as well as more information about the economic development activities of New Jersey's community colleges, are available upon request from the Council office.

Dr. Lawrence A. Napolitano, President
New Jersey Council of County Colleges, March 1999

AN OUTDATED IMAGE

When community colleges were founded in New Jersey thirty years ago, they were junior colleges commissioned to provide the first two years of a traditional four-year college degree. In their book, *Prosperity: The Coming 20-Year Boom and What It Means to You*, Bob Davis and David Wessel of the *Wall Street Journal* feature the role of community colleges in America's skill-based economy:

"The two-year schools often are derided as destinations for people not smart enough, motivated enough or rich enough to go to four-year colleges. That's an outdated image. The nation's 1,100 community colleges have evolved into institutions that successfully give workers the skills that employers need (p.12)."

Microsoft chairman Bill Gates obviously agrees. After making a substantial donation to a community college, he said:

"In terms of responding to the needs of the marketplace, getting people ready for the new jobs that are out there, the community colleges really are the leading edge."

MEETING THE BOTTOM LINE

Although New Jersey's community colleges are public institutions supported by the counties in which they are located as well as by the State, at least one-third of the average operating budget is paid by the credit and non-credit students and clients.

This means that community colleges must approach their business like private sector enterprises, performing market research and meeting customer needs with quality programs and services.

Hudson County Community College, for example, conducts cyclical performance reviews of every academic and administrative department. It uses focus groups, surveys



and research data to assess effectiveness, efficiency and customer service in order to continuously improve quality.

Only ten years after New Jersey's community colleges were created, the changes in America's economy and the enrollment of older and part-time students made it necessary for them to shift their focus to workforce development. Of the total number of credit and noncredit students now being served by New Jersey's community colleges, only about 10% are traditional, college age students who study full-time. At least eighty percent of all community college students are already attached to the workforce in full- or part-time jobs.

Since the mid 1970s, the colleges have increasingly focused on diversifying and continuously improving their workforce development offerings. As we approach the 21st century, the business of community colleges is primarily in supporting local companies, large and small, with skilled employees, while providing individuals with the credentials and skills that enable them to earn higher wages.

Self-Supporting Institutes: On the average, New Jersey community colleges' noncredit divisions serve as many students as the credit programs. Most of these noncredit departments are self-supporting, with their budgets dependent upon student enrollments and training contracts with private businesses and state agencies. Usually designated "continuing education," they also have names such as "Career Training Institute" or "Institute for Business and Professional Development." For these departments, which compete with private training schools and consultants, quality service is a must.

When Princeton University put out a request for bids to train its staff on computers, Mercer County Community College went head-to-head with the best private trainers in New Jersey and won the contract. Ms. Pam Hersh, Director of Princeton's Community and State Affairs, was quoted in a local newspaper article:

"The Center for Training and Development at Mercer County Community College was chosen on the basis of a competitive bidding process. The University was looking for quality of instruction, flexibility, responsiveness and cost-effectiveness. The Center finished the winner among a pool of several competent applicants."⁴

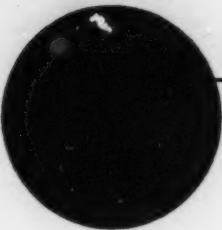
RESPONDING TO MARKET NEEDS

Each New Jersey community college does market research in its service area through surveys of business and industry as well as through focus groups of employers, students and former students. And academic officers, deans of continuing education and institutional researchers carefully follow labor market projections.

Industry Clusters: Obvious concentrations of particular business clusters in some counties assure that the local community college will provide occupational programs that support those industries. In Atlantic County, the college has a Casino Institute and large programs in culinary arts and hospitality management. Hudson County Community College, too, right across the river from New York City's tourist industry, has a fine Culinary Arts Institute that offers credit and noncredit training at many levels. Raritan Valley Community College in Somerset County has a Center for International Business and Education that in 1995 won the United States President's "E" Award for excellence in export services. The Center sponsors noncredit seminars, roundtables and conferences, and offers an associate degree in International Business.

Several New Jersey counties have concentrations of small manufacturers, whose processes have become increasingly sophisticated. Community colleges in Camden and Essex Counties have Computer Integrated Manufacturing Centers and Brookdale Community College (Monmouth County) and Middlesex County College have Advanced Technology Centers (ATCs). Bergen Community College will soon begin construction of a new technology and science center on its main campus and is developing a cross-training program with Passaic County Community College, "Interdisciplinary Laboratory Science Technology," that will prepare technicians for several high technology industry clusters.

The Technical Services Center at Middlesex now houses the NJ Center for Advanced Technological Education (NJCATE), which is funded by a National Science Foundation grant. With partners from higher education and industry, NJCATE developed two cross-training curricula: Mecomtronics Engineering Technology, a word derived



from "mechanical, computers and electronics," and Tele-media Communications Technology. Both programs are designed to prepare the quality technicians that New Jersey's high technology manufacturers need to survive and grow.

In Morris County, where many pharmaceutical industries have their headquarters, County College of Morris has many programs to support that sector, such as Biotechnology and Biomedical Equipment. Cumberland County College is playing a leading role in developing the first aquaculture industry in New Jersey. In Salem County, where DuPont is the biggest employer, the college worked with the company to develop a Process Operator program.

Downsizing & Retooling: In most counties, market research also provides important information on the numbers of individuals who have been affected by corporate downsizing, either as dislocated workers needing retraining or as continuing employees needing cross-training. The New Jersey Legislature responded to the needs of these dislocated workers by creating the Workforce Development Partnership (WDP) program in 1992. The program, run by the NJ Department of Labor, includes two components: Individual Training Grants (ITGs) for dislocated workers, and Customized Training Grants to assist employers in staying or locating in New Jersey.

Community college success in delivering quality training programs is reflected by data in the *First Year Interim Report Evaluation of the Workforce Development Partnership Program*. That report includes the results of a Rutgers University survey of 1,573 WDP grant recipients in 1994, 1995 and 1996. Since most training was provided by community colleges and proprietary schools, the report only gives customer satisfaction results for those two groups of providers. Of those respondents whose training was at a community college, 72% were very satisfied with the training, while 57% of individuals receiving training from proprietary institutions were very satisfied. (Executive Summary, p.4)⁵

The report also states that although community college training programs for WDP Individual Training Grant recipients tend to be longer, they are also lower in cost.

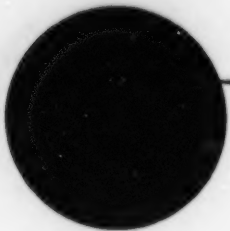
The average award to individuals who received training from a community college was \$2,466, with the average duration being 9.2 months. The average Individual Training Grant for use at a proprietary school was \$3,488 for an average program length of 4.2 months. (Executive Summary, p. 3)

Another initiative to meet the needs of dislocated workers is the NJ Department of Labor's Self Employment Assistance (SEA) program, which was outsourced to the community colleges. A community college consortium called The Network for Occupational Training and Education (NOTE) administers the program. Bergen Community College, Mercer County Community College and Warren County Community College, all of which host Small Business Development Centers on their campuses, joined with six other colleges to develop and deliver a uniform curriculum of 60 hours of small business skills. The training curriculum includes development of both a business plan and a marketing plan and is supported by individual counseling provided by Small Business Development Centers. Results of the SEA program so far show that 74% of those dislocated workers who completed the program in 1996 started their own businesses and were still in business a year later. This is almost double the national success rate of new business start-ups.⁶

Licensure and Certification: Within the last decade the number of occupations requiring licensure in New Jersey has risen dramatically so that today more than 600,000 people hold various licenses needed to work in the state.⁷ Community college training institutes offer more than fifty noncredit programs that lead to licensure.

With the demand for employees in information technology, all community colleges are offering nationally recognized certification programs. At Ocean County College and Hudson County Community College, for example, students can become PC Support Technicians through the noncredit A+ Certification Program. In partnership with C-Tech, Bergen Community College offers Network Cabling Specialist Certification.

To support the resurgence in home and commercial construction in New Jersey, community colleges have



increased their offerings of noncredit courses leading to construction code state licensure by the Department of Community Affairs. At Salem Community College, students can work toward becoming a Construction Code Official; at Gloucester County College's center at Pureland Industrial Park, students seeking licensure can choose from a range of courses that include Electrical Inspector, Plumbing Inspector and Fire Protection Inspector.

RETAINING AND ATTRACTING JOBS

Community colleges have a vested interest in attracting and retaining jobs in their service areas. This is usually done through customized contract training. When community colleges broker customized training, their goal is to deliver precisely what the employer needs — when and where the company needs it — and to provide the anticipated outcomes. Only in this way can the college succeed in the competitive marketplace. This can be called the “What, Where, When and How Well” of the workforce development business.

What: Developing precisely the right, up-to-date instructional program is done in collaboration with the employer, using such tools as the DACUM process. DACUM, Developing A Curriculum, was designed and copyrighted by Ohio State University,⁸ and the process is frequently used to design customized training. This process analyzes the tasks and skills of an occupation by using focus groups comprised of expert workers. All the tasks performed by the well-trained employee are identified through the focus groups, and then the facilitator identifies all the skills needed to perform each task. A curriculum is then developed to teach prospective employees all the skills needed to perform the full range of tasks.

Most community college contract training is brokered by the colleges, who recruit the best instructors for each job. As a result, there is almost no limit to the kinds of programs or the level of training available to corporate clients. Camden County College, for example, has been delivering holography training to a local company's professional engineers.⁹

Where: Contract training is usually delivered at the company's worksite or on campus, depending on the type of program that is needed. With 43 campuses, extension centers and business incubators, community college facilities are within easy commuting distance of every company and student.

Recent developments in distance education are also allowing the colleges to deliver courses and training via Internet, interactive television and CD Rom.

When: Community college programs operate all year from early morning until late evening, both during the week and on weekends. In addition, the asynchronous distance learning courses delivered via Internet and television are available to students at any time of the day or night.

How Well: Every community college noncredit course and training program is evaluated by the students, and customized training programs are evaluated by both the employees and the company. In this way, the colleges are able to continuously improve the quality of both their curricula and their faculty.

The chart on page 5 shows examples of community college customized training programs that helped retain jobs in New Jersey, demonstrating the power of these workforce development programs. The chart includes two corporate headquarters — Okidata and Vlasic Foods International — that were attracted to their locations because of the availability of community college training.

STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

Since their founding, every community college has formed strategic alliances with employers and professional associations in their own county or region.

With Local Companies: An outstanding example of such a partnership is that between Ames Rubber Corporation and Sussex County Community College. When the company made a commitment to increase the educational levels of its employees, it began a relationship with the community college that has grown into a partnership of extraordi-

nary mutual benefit. The college has become the main resource of continuing education for the company, and after Ames won the Malcolm Baldrige Award in 1991, some of its managers and supervisors provided Total Quality Management guidance and training for the college. Today, Sussex County Community College continues its in-house Continuous Process Improvement while providing training that most recently enabled Ames to increase productivity by seven percent.

When the United States Department of Defense began downsizing in the early 1990s, Burlington County College identified a number of defense subcontractors who needed to retool for dual use manufacturing. The College formed partnerships with some of these companies and won a \$900,000 National Science Foundation grant that enabled the companies to computerize their manufacturing processes and to switch back and forth between supplying defense and private industries. Champion Fasteners gave the college classroom space right in the factory, where the

EXAMPLES OF JOBS RETAINED OR ADDED THROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRAINING

COMPANY	PRODUCT(S)	TRAINING PROVIDER	TRAINING PROGRAMS	JOBS SAVED/ADDED
Air Cruisers and six of their suppliers	Airplane evacuation systems	Brookdale Community College	CD rom job support system, Supervisory skills, Team building, Computer applications	270 90
McLean Engineering	Electronics and cooling blowers	Mercer County Community College	English as a Second Language Workplace communication	160
Okidata Company	Computer equipment	Burlington County College	None yet - the company located opposite the BCC-NJIT Center to attract labor supply	325 projected"
Patriot Manufacturing	Storm doors and windows	Atlantic Community College	TQM Computer Applications AutoCAD	36
U.S. Filter/Wallace & Tiernan	Water filtration & chlorination equipment	Cumberland County College	TQM Manufacturing processes Computer applications	200
Vlasic Foods International	Prepared foods	Camden County College	PC Skills Team Building Sales Training HR Training Workplace communications Customer Service	268
Witco Corporation	Chemical bases for cleansing products	Middlesex County College	TQM Team building Workplace communications Basic chemistry Shop math Blueprint reading Advanced equipment repair	115



college retrained the company's 20 employees. The college also recruited dislocated workers who, with a combination of the college's classroom training and on-the-job training (OJT) provided by the company, were able to join the Champion team and expand the company to 35 employees.

With Hospitals: Fifteen of New Jersey's community colleges offer the associate degree in nursing. These programs are usually offered in cooperation with local hospitals, with whom the colleges enjoy long-standing partnerships. The colleges provide all the academic courses and the hospitals provide the clinical experience.

Through Community College Consortia: In order to keep their programs more cost effective, New Jersey's community colleges have often banded together to implement regional programs. With the availability of distance learning, this concept has enabled colleges in various counties to offer programs jointly. An example of this is the delivery of Mercer County Community College's aviation program at County College of Morris and Raritan Valley Community College via interactive television.

Instead of developing and investing in its own nursing program, Sussex County Community College called upon Passaic County Community College to deliver its long-standing and successful nursing degree program at Sussex' campus.

A partnership to deliver noncredit training was formed when Warren County Community College and Raritan Valley Community College teamed up to provide ISO 9000 training to a consortium of small manufacturers in their region.

With Four-Year Colleges and Universities: Because of their mission to provide programs that transfer to baccalaureate programs, community colleges have numerous alliances with four-year colleges, including dual admissions programs and joint campuses. Union County College shares its Scotch Plains campus with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, where both institutions offer joint programs in allied health. To establish a public four-year college presence in Monmouth County, Brookdale Community College is currently building a joint campus with Rutgers University.

All 19 community colleges have articulation agreements with four-year colleges and universities, both in New Jersey and out of state. These agreements allow community college graduates to transfer into a four-year college with full junior status.

For a Particular Industry: The Kellogg Foundation has provided support for 13 consortia nationwide to improve the food industry. New Jersey participants in the Mid-Atlantic States Consortium (MAC) include Rutgers University's Cooperative Extension, Raritan Valley Community College, Sussex County Community College, Wakefern Foods and other companies engaged in food processing, distribution and sales. Their focus is workforce development, and their projects range from career awareness for elementary and middle-school students to training workplace mentors.

To Address Similar Needs: Ocean County College discovered that three major organizations are in the midst of retooling their processes and therefore need either retraining for current employees or major staffing changes. The college put together a Skills Transferability System Information Forum for Lucent Technologies, GPU Nuclear Corporation and the Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station. The Forum introduced these major employers to technology-based solutions for their human resources challenges along with the opportunity to brainstorm together.

A Statewide Agreement: A recent alliance was formed among all nineteen community colleges and the New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program (NJMEP). Like MEPs in other states, the program in New Jersey was instituted to assist small and mid-sized companies to improve their manufacturing and business processes through careful evaluations followed, as appropriate, by improvements in product design, process computerization, strategic plant layout, cash flow management, marketing and workforce development. The community colleges are assisting MEP by helping to identify companies that may need process improvement and by providing contract training when that is needed.



SUPPORTING THE MIDDLE CLASS

Davis and Wessel's book, *Prosperity*, focuses on middle class families because the majority of Americans fall into this class. They present the thesis that:

"This new prosperity will be widely shared, helping millions of Americans who thus far have been pushed to the sidelines in the high-tech economy.... Community colleges, the unheralded aid stations of American education, will help millions move from \$7-an-hour jobs to \$17-an hour jobs" (p.7).

Responsive to Demographics: As "the people's colleges," charged with improving the quality of life for persons from varied backgrounds and in widely differing life situations, community colleges must be sensitive and responsive to changing demographics. For example, when women entered the workforce in greater numbers, many community colleges experienced an enrollment shift from equal numbers of men and women to two-thirds female. In many cases, this meant building child care centers. Similarly, as minorities sought increased economic opportunity, community college minority enrollment shifted dramatically.

At Essex County College in Newark, many women coming to the college for training and education come from backgrounds of desperate poverty and may suffer from abusive relationships or substance dependency. To enable these students to succeed, the college has instituted a variety of intensive support services that have enabled these women to enter and succeed in the workforce with companies like Continental Airlines.

The flood of immigrants who have been settling in New Jersey during the last several years has made it necessary for all 19 community colleges to increase the number of English as a Second Language (ESL) programs being offered as pre-college, noncredit and contract training for employers. At Hudson County Community College, with its campuses in Jersey City and West New York, over 20% of all credit students begin their studies in ESL. Hudson's 1998 valedictorian was a young lady from the Dominican

Republic who began by studying ESL, majored in electrical engineering technology and is currently continuing her education at NJIT.

Passaic County Community College in Paterson serves over 1,500 students annually in its pre-college ESL program. Union County College's Career Institute at its Elizabeth Campus serves between 1,500 and 2,000 students per year in its noncredit ESL programs and offers some computer and automated office skills courses in Spanish.

Raising the Standard of Living: In his book, *Working in the Middle*, W. Norton Grubb of the University of California focuses on "the mid-skilled labor market."¹ This pool of American workers is comprised of all those who have "some college education but less than a baccalaureate degree" and constitutes nearly one-third of the total labor force (p.2).

"The sub-baccalaureate labor force includes the largest proportion of technicians like electronics technicians, computer technicians, drafters and engineering technicians as well as the mechanics and electricians whose jobs have been upgraded through computer technology...."

"Furthermore, many occupations in the sub-baccalaureate labor market are projected to continue growing. The occupations with the highest growth rates between now and 2005 include health technicians; technicians and related support occupations; ... and some administrative support occupations, including computer operators" (p.4).

The broad educational needs of this labor force, so crucial to America's success in the global, information-driven economy, are addressed by community colleges more comprehensively and for more American students than by any other sector of education or higher education. Davis and Wessel state:

"Community colleges are doing what other educational institutions in America aren't doing: preparing people; often those with mediocre basic schooling, to get well-paying, middle class jobs. The proof is in the paycheck" (pp. 151, 153).

MEAN ANNUAL EARNINGS, BY LEVELS OF EDUCATION: INDIVIDUALS 25-64

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	AVERAGE 1990 WAGES	PERCENTAGE OVER HS
High school diploma	\$14,851	0.0%
Less than one year - no degree	\$16,450	10.8%
One year college - no degree	\$16,421	10.6%
Two years college - no degree	\$17,173	15.6%
Vocational [credit] certificate	\$17,616	18.6%
Associate degree	\$19,335	30.2%

Based on data sets from several national surveys, Grubb concludes that college credits earned at either a four-year or two-year college raise the earnings capacity of mid-skilled workers. The table above summarizes Grubb's wage differentials in 1990.

Understanding the economic value of college credit, many community college noncredit divisions have worked with their academic colleagues to offer courses that can be taken for credit or noncredit right in the same class, depending on the student's own preference, or to enable noncredit courses to transfer into credit programs. Other colleges, such as Gloucester County College and Cumberland County College, have transformed some of the computer certification programs, such as network management and A++ certification, into credit degree programs.

CONCLUSION

"What goes on at a school like Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, Ohio, and similar institutions across the country, is more important to the American middle class than what happens at Harvard...." (Davis and Wessel, p.151).

Research shows that community college training and education pays off, not only for individual students and corporate clients, but also for economic developers who access these powerhouses of workforce development. This

overview of how community colleges operate their workforce development businesses is necessarily incomplete. Among other topics that could be discussed are how the colleges work to revitalize urban neighborhoods, assist people in moving from welfare to work and support the future workforce by providing after-school and summer camp programs for children.

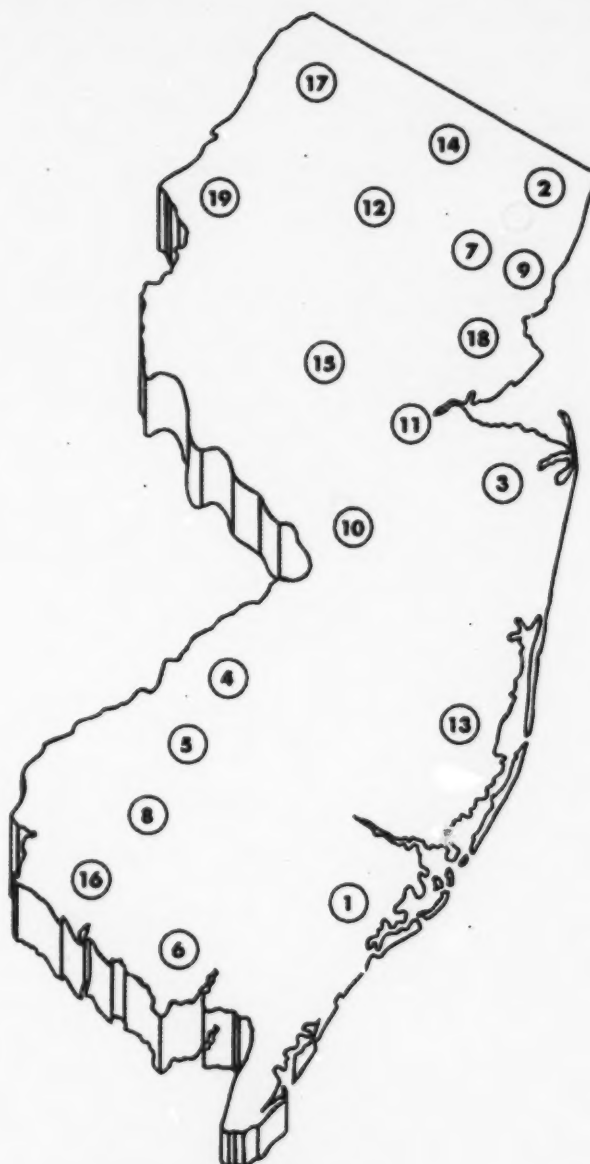
SareLee Pindar was Programs and Economic Development Officer for the New Jersey Council of County Colleges from 1993 to 1999.

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NEW JERSEY COMMUNITY COLLEGES

1. **ATLANTIC CAPE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
5100 Black Horse Pike, Mays Landing, NJ 08330
(609) 343-4900
2. **BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
400 Paramus Road, Paramus, NJ 07652
(201) 447-7100
3. **BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
765 Newman Springs Road, Lincroft, NJ 07738-1597
(732) 842-1900
4. **BURLINGTON COUNTY COLLEGE**
Pemberton-Browns Mills Road, College Dr.
Pemberton, NJ 08068
(609) 894-9311
5. **CAMDEN COUNTY COLLEGE**
P.O. Box 200, College Dr., Blackwood, NJ 08012
(609) 227-7200
6. **CUMBERLAND COUNTY COLLEGE**
P.O. Box 517, College Dr., Vineland, NJ 08362-0517
(609) 691-8600
7. **ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE**
303 University Avenue, Newark, NJ 07102
(973) 877-3000
8. **GLOUCESTER COUNTY COLLEGE**
1400 Tanyard Road, Sewell, NJ 08080
(609) 468-5000
9. **HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
25 Journal Square, Jersey City, NJ 07306
(201) 656-2020
10. **MERCER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
1200 Old Trenton Road, Trenton, NJ 08690
(609) 586-4800
11. **MIDDLESEX COUNTY COLLEGE**
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Edison, NJ 08818-3050
(732) 548-6000
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